

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1 and 4, as set forth in the listing of claims that follows:

Listing of Claims:

(insert marked-up claims)

1. (Currently Amended) ~~Apparatus~~ An apparatus for estimating the weight of an occupant of a vehicle seat including a seat cushion frame assembly having characteristic lateral width and longitudinal depth dimensions and supported by first and second laterally spaced floor brackets secured to a vehicle floor and extending upwardly therefrom to define upwardly facing mounting surfaces, the apparatus comprising:

a load cell including first and second substantially planar rigid plates, and a fluid-filled bladder interposed between said first and second rigid plates, said first and second rigid plates and said fluid-filled bladder juxtaposed to register with and substantially dimensionally correspond laterally and longitudinally with said seat cushion assembly to effect distribution of the combined load weight of the vehicle seat and occupant;

fastener means for securing said load cell between ~~a~~ the frame of said seat and the mounting surfaces of said floor brackets such that said load cell spans an open space between said first and second floor brackets, said fastener means including compliant elements for preloading said bladder between said first and second plates, and substantially non-compliant elements for preventing separation of said seat from said floor brackets; and

a pressure sensor coupled to an exit port of said bladder for sensing a pressure of the fluid in said bladder that provides an indication of the weight of the occupant.

2. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said compliant elements are springs or foam pads interposed between said seat and said load cell.

3. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said compliant elements are springs or foam pads interposed between said floor brackets and said load cell.

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said non-compliant elements are bolts passing through adjacent registering apertures in said first and second rigid plates and fluid-filled bladder of said load cell.